

away on Thursday, August 26 at the 154th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. I join his friends, family, and loved ones in mourning his loss.

Staff Sergeant Belue was a National Guard soldier assigned to Charlie Troop, 1–98th Cavalry Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team. At the time of his passing, Staff Sergeant Belue was attending the Maneuver Senior Leaders Course as a part of his professional military education and career advancement.

He served in the U.S. Armed Forces for 24 years, earning the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal (2nd Award), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy Unit Commendation, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon (2nd Award), Armed Forces Reserve Medal, (2nd Award), Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Combat Action Badge, ad Iraq Campaign medal (with 4 campaign stars). He served on three deployments with the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Mississippi National Guard in support off Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005 and again for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2009, then Operation Spartan Shield 2018 to 2019.

Left to cherish his memory are his wife of twenty-two years, Jennifer Brents Belue; sons, Blake, Jason, and Bentley; and granddaughter Hazel. He is preceded in death by his grandparents.

I am grateful for Staff Sergeant Belue's years of service to the state of Mississippi and this country.

HONORING ERIN BELL AS IOWAN OF THE WEEK

HON. CYNTHIA AXNE

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Ms. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a tireless advocate for the refugee community, Ms. Erin Bell, as Iowan of the Week.

Erin runs the non-profit organization “Des Moines Refugee Support” based in Des Moines and the metro area. Erin is known as someone who has a big heart and an even bigger vision for supporting thousands of refugees in central Iowa. Des Moines Refugee Support strives to serve as a voice, friend, and mentor for all refugees as they make a new home in Iowa. Their focus as an organization is on empowerment, and they strive to address shared issues and work together to uplift all communities.

Upon arrival in the United States, refugee families receive about 90 days of assistance from a caseworker to help them learn about their new home. That's not much time when there's so much to learn. Erin's goal is to fill the gaps when refugees arrive in Iowa.

One of the programs designed to help fill the gaps is their youth soccer sponsorship program. Erin saw the passion for soccer among many of the refugee children, and knew she had to find a way to bring their dream of playing organized soccer to life. Des Moines Refugee Support partnered with Des

Moines Soccer club to raise money through the nonprofit to pay for the kids' cleats, shin guards, registration fees and other items associated with playing an organized sport. This has allowed the kids that are brand new to Iowa an opportunity to make new friends, get involved in their community, and of course play soccer.

Advocates like Erin, and organizations like Des Moines Refugee Support, are what makes our Iowa communities across the state such great places to live. I will always fight in Congress to be a voice for refugees, and to ensure Iowa is a welcoming place. It is my pleasure to name Erin Bell as Iowan of the Week.

COMMENDING MR. PAUL COSTELLO ON HIS SERVICE TO THE STATE OF VERMONT

HON. PETER WELCH

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and honor my friend Paul Costello, who has served since 2000 as Executive Director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD), part of the National Rural Development Partnership established by Congress. Although Paul is retiring from VCRD, his legacy will continue in the projects and initiatives that he has inspired in rural communities across Vermont.

Throughout his years as Executive Director, Paul has established himself as a respected neutral facilitator of community conversations. Paul has a unique ability to unite diverse viewpoints and lead people to consensus, action and success. He is dedicated to the ideals of democracy and to the promotion of social and economic opportunity for all Vermonters. He is a patriotic enthusiast for civic engagement, energizing all who venture into his orbit.

Among his many activities, Paul coordinates the annual VCRD Governor's Rural Summit to build federal and state cross-agency action plans. Each year he facilitates multiple community visits with teams of state, federal, non-profit and private leaders to help rural communities evaluate and prioritize opportunities, develop action plans, connect to resources and rally to action.

Over the past twenty years, Paul has produced and facilitated numerous Vermont Policy Councils and Community Development efforts including the Vermont Forest Products Council, the Vermont Agriculture Viability Council, the Vermont Council on Culture and Innovation, the Vermont Council on Planning, the Vermont Rural Energy Council, the VT Creative Communities Program, the Council on the Future of Vermont, the Vermont Working Landscape Council, the Vermont Working Landscape Partnership, and the Vermont Working Lands Coalition, the e-Vermont Community Broadband Project and Vermont Digital Economy Project, the Vermont Higher Education Food Systems Council, and the Vermont Climate Change Economy Council. Most recently, Paul has chaired the Governor's Covid-19 Local Support and Community Action Team.

A native Vermonter, Paul obtained his B.A. and M.A. at the University of Vermont and

earned a PhD in intellectual history at McGill University in Montreal. He has devoted a substantial part of his career to the cultivation of Vermont civic institutions, and the state is a better place because of it. I wish him a productive and fulfilling retirement.

IN RECOGNITION OF WAYNE FREEDMAN

HON. JACKIE SPEIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Wayne Freedman, one of the Bay Area's most intrepid television reporters and a fixture on ABC 7 for 30 years who is retiring after a remarkable and award-winning career.

Wayne has covered a vast variety of events here at home and abroad, from major earthquakes, fires, and hurricanes, to national and local elections, to major sports events, to the September 11th attacks, to the COVID-19 pandemic, to NASA space missions, to beached whales. In 1992, ABC 7 sent him solo to Moscow to cover Russia's Second Revolution. He traveled across the U.S. by train visiting small towns to capture the pulse of America after 9/11. No matter the content of a story, Wayne will get to the truth and he has a knack for finding the human angle that resonates with viewers. He likes to put it this way: “My philosophy is to find, small stories within large ones, and large stories in the small ones. Those are the most telling.”

His philosophy and work have earned him over 50 Emmy Awards and several Edward R. Murrow awards. Many of his pieces were picked up by ABC's national show World News Tonight. Wayne is also the author of a book that is required reading in several college journalism programs in the U.S., Canada, and Europe, *It Takes More Than Good Looks To Succeed at Television News Reporting*.

Television is part of the Freedman family's DNA. Wayne's father, Mike Freedman, started working for the ABC network in 1948. He pioneered the use of live, hand-held video cameras for covering news and sports events. As soon as Wayne could walk, his dad took him into the field with him.

Wayne had his first byline in 1968 when he started writing a weekly column about life in middle school for a paper that is now the Los Angeles Daily News. That same summer he worked in San Francisco as a grip for ABC on a profile about heavyweight boxing champion Sonny Liston.

Wayne received his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from UCLA in 1977 and his Master's Degree in Journalism from the University of Missouri at Columbia in 1978. In 1981 he moved to San Francisco from where he has been reporting ever since. Before he joined ABC 7 in 1991, he worked for CBS News traveling the country to produce a weekly segment called *Only in America* for CBS This Morning.

For those who have seen Wayne Freedman reporting out in the field, they will have noticed an ever-present still camera in his hand with which he snaps behind the scenes photographs that he posts on social media. It's an eye-opening way to see the world from Wayne's perspective.